

AP LITERARY TERMS

Allegory	Tale in verse or prose in which characters, actions, settings represent abstract ideas or moral qualities	Bunyan's <i>Pilgrim's Progress</i>	
Alliteration	Repetition of accented consonant sounds at the beginning of words for effect	"The noisy gnat knitted nine sweaters"	
Allusion	A reference in literature or art to previous literature, history, mythology, pop culture/contemporary events, or the Bible (usually without explanation)	"It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles And see the great Achilles" (Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "Ulysses")	
Ambiguity	Quality of being intentionally unclear, allowing events or situations to be interpreted in more than one way	"Thou still unravished bride of quietness" (John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn" – <i>still</i> can mean 'never living,' or 'yet,' or 'enduring,' or 'silent')	
Anachronism	Element in a story that is out of its time frame	In <i>Julius Caesar</i> , Shakespeare mentions caps, which the Romans did not wear	
Analogy	Comparison of unfamiliar or unusual concept or object with one that is familiar, usually forcing the reader to think about a concept more critically	"Knowledge always desires increase: it is like fire, which must first be kindled by some external agent, but which will afterwards propagate itself." (Samuel Johnson)	
Anticlimax	A sudden and disappointing end to an intense situation.	Many critics consider Jim's capture and rescue in <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> an example of anticlimax	
Antihero	A protagonist who carries the action of a literary piece but does not embody the classic characteristics of courage, strength, and nobility	Holden Caulfield in <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i> , Yossarian in <i>Catch 22</i> , and Merseult in <i>The Stranger</i>	
Antithesis	A concept that is directly opposed to a previously presented idea (thesis)	In <i>Star Wars</i> , Darth Vader's ideals are antithetical to those of the Jedi	
Aphorism	A terse statement that expresses a general truth or moral principle	"Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise" (Benjamin Franklin)	
Apostrophe	Direct address to a person, object, or abstract entity that is not present and/or cannot answer	"Death, be not proud" (John Donne) "Milton! Thou shouldst be living at this hour!" (William Wordsworth)	
Apotheosis	Elevating someone or something to the level of a god	Homer apotheosizes Helen of Troy for her	

		beauty in <i>The Iliad</i>	
Archetype	A situation, symbol, or character type that recurs in mythology, folklore, and literature of a wide variety of cultures throughout the world	The classic hero, the quest, the trickster, the dark forest, the fair maiden, the mentor, the sidekick, etc.	
Aside	Short speech or remark made by an actor to the audience rather than to other characters	In a room full of people, Macbeth announces his plans to the audience in an aside: "To the castle of Macduff I will surprise..." (IV, I, 150)	
Assonance	The repeated use of a vowel sound	"Twice five miles of fertile ground" (Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Kubla Khan")	
Attitude	The author's feelings toward the topic he or she is writing about, revealed through point of view, word choice, sentence structure, etc.	In <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> , Harper Lee uses an innocent and unjaded child to express her own attitude toward prejudice.	
Aubade	A poem or song about lovers who must leave one another in the early hours of the morning	"Song" and "Break of Day" by John Donne	
Ballad	Folk song or poem passed down orally that tells a story (often loosely based on an actual incident), usually composed in four-line stanzas (quatrains) with rhyme scheme <i>abcb</i> , often contains a refrain	<i>Barbara Allen</i> (anonymous) <i>Lord Randal</i> (anonymous)	
Blank verse	Unrhymed iambic pentameter (five feet of two syllables each with the first syllable unstressed and the second syllable stressed)	Much of Shakespeare's dialogue and the entirety of Milton's <i>Paradise Lost</i> are written in blank verse	
Bildungsroman	Novel dealing with the formative years of the main character – a "coming of age" novel	Fielding's <i>Tom Jones</i> , Dickens's <i>Great Expectations</i> , Charlotte Brontë's <i>Jane Eyre</i>	
Byronic hero	Character type, describes the autobiographical heroes of the poetry of Lord Byron as well as numerous other heroes of romantic poetry and fiction based on Byron's model. The Byronic hero is typically a handsome and wealthy man consumed with an obsessive love for a woman who either cannot or will not return that love in the same fashion. The Byronic hero is characterized by a mysterious past and seems to possess some dark secret or past sin that is never fully revealed	Harold in <i>Childe Harold's Pilgrimage</i> Mr. Rochester in <i>Jane Eyre</i> Heathcliff in <i>Wuthering Heights</i> Jay Gatsby in <i>The Great Gatsby</i> Rhett Butler in <i>Gone With The Wind</i> Ethan Edwards in <i>The Searchers</i> Batman of comic book fame	
Caesura	A pause within a line of poetry that breaks the regularity of the metrical pattern	"Then be not coy, but use your time; And while ye may, go marry" (Robert Herrick, "To The Virgins...")	

Carpe diem	[Latin 'seize the day'] frequent theme of 16 th & 17 th century poetry; promotes the pursuit of earthly pleasures (especially sex) while one is young and carefree	"To The Virgins, Make Much of Time" by Robert Herrick "To His Coy Mistress" by Andrew Marvell	
Catalog	List of people or things incorporated in an epic or a romance, includes in-depth description of each	The list of fallen angels in lines 374-505 of Book I of <i>Paradise Lost</i>	
Catharsis	Term coined by Aristotle to describe an emotional cleansing or feeling of relief gained through the release of the negative emotions of pity and fear while watching tragedy	Many people are upset by the death of John Proctor near the end of <i>The Crucible</i> ; they are experiencing <i>catharsis</i>	
Chiasmus	The opposite of parallel construction: inverting the second of two phrases that would otherwise be parallel	Parallel: "I like the idea; I don't like its execution." Chiasmus: "I Like the idea; its execution, I don't."	
Classicism	Tendency in art of Ancient Greece and Rome to place emphasis on reason, clarity, balance, and order	The works of Virgil and Horace produced during the reign of Augustus, e.g. <i>The Aeneid</i>	
Colloquialism	Slang word or phrase characteristic of a particular regional dialect, used in everyday conversation. Used in writing to reflect the way people speak in a particular time and/or place	The speech of Pap in <i>Huck Finn</i> is filled with colloquialisms: "Looky here – you drop that school, you hear? I'll learn people to bring up a boy to put on airs over his own father."	
Comic relief	Humor that provides relief of tension between more serious episodes	The bawdy jokes of the porter following Duncan's murder in <i>Macbeth</i>	
Conceit	A far-fetched comparison between two seemingly unrelated things; an extended metaphor that gains appeal from its unusual or extraordinary comparison	"This flea is you and I, and this / Our marriage-bed and marriage-temple is." (John Donne, "The Flea")	
Connotation	Meaning or abstract value typically associated with a word; it that transcends the dictionary meaning	<i>Home</i> connotes warmth and security; <i>house</i> does not	
Consonance	Repetition of same consonant sounds in words with different vowel sounds	"Far on the <u>ri</u> gging plai <u>z</u> s of wi <u>ndy</u> Troy" (Tennyson, "Ulysses")	
Couplet	Two successive rhyming lines of the same number of syllables with matching cadence	"Hope springs eternal in the human breast: Man never is, but always to be blest." (Alexander Pope, <i>An Essay on Man</i>)	
Denotation	Literal, dictionary definition of a word or phrase	<i>Thin</i> and <i>skinny</i> both have the denotation of 'not fat,' though their connotations are slightly different	

<p>DÉNOUEMENT</p> <p>(pronounced "day-noo-maw")</p>	<p>[Literally, 'unravelling'] Outcome or clarification at the end of a story or play; the winding down from climax to ending</p>	<p>In <i>The Scarlet Letter</i>, the dénouement occurs after Dimmesdale's death.</p>	
<p>Deus ex machina</p> <p>(pronounced "day-oos ecks mocky-nuh")</p>	<p>[Latin, literally 'god from a machine,' the term comes from Greek drama in which the character of a god would be lowered onto the stage with a crane] The term describes a person who suddenly and unexpectedly appears or reveals a hidden identity and (often unacceptably) solves what had been a seemingly impossible dilemma, producing a "cop-out" ending</p>	<p>Charles Dickens has often been accused of incorporating a <i>deus ex machina</i> (i.e. John Barsad in <i>A Tale of Two Cities</i>) to very conveniently (and perhaps unbelievably so) provide a solution to conflicts in his work</p>	
<p>Diction</p>	<p>Words deliberately chosen to achieve a particular effect or tone</p>	<p>Hawthorne's diction in <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> is formal, allowing for a serious criticism of Puritan hypocrisy, while Twain's diction in <i>Huck Finn</i> is informal, allowing for an ironic and humorous criticism of contemporary American hypocrisy.</p>	
<p>Didactic</p>	<p>Adjective used to describe a work in which the author's primary purpose is to instruct, teach, or moralize</p>	<p>Aesop's fables are didactic.</p>	
<p>Dramatic monologue</p>	<p>Poem in which one character (<u>not</u> the author himself) speaks to other character(s). Typical of the Victorian era</p>	<p>"My Last Duchess" by Robert Browning</p> <p>"Ulysses" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson</p>	
<p>Dynamic character</p>	<p>Character who exhibits marked change in attitude, beliefs, temperament, personal relationships, etc.</p>	<p>Scrooge in Dickens's "A Christmas Carol"</p>	
<p>Elegy</p>	<p>Poem of mourning over the death of an individual</p>	<p>"Lycidas" by John Milton</p>	
<p>Elision</p>	<p>The omission of an unstressed vowel or syllable to preserve the meter of a poem</p>	<p>"I wandered lonely as a cloud That floats on high <i>o'er</i> vales and hills." -William Wordsworth</p>	
<p>Ellipsis</p>	<p>An omission of words from a sentence, <i>often</i> (though <i>not always</i>) indicated by three consecutive periods</p>	<p>"Composed in the Tower before his execution These moving verses." - Anthony Hecht "More Light! More Light!"</p>	
<p>End-stopped line</p>	<p>Line of poetry in which the grammatical and logical sense are completed within the line (and thus a pause is expected when reading aloud)</p>	<p>"A little learning is a dangerous thing; Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring. There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,</p>	

		<p>And drinking largely sobers us again."</p> <p>(Alexander Pope, <i>An Essay on Criticism</i>)</p>	
Enjambment	<p>The running over of a clause or sentence from one line of poetry into the next without a grammatical pause (remember, when reading aloud, always read the <i>sentence</i> and <u>not</u> the line)</p>	<p>"April is the cruellest month, breeding Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing Memory and desire, stirring Dull roots with spring rain. Winter kept us warm, covering Earth in forgetful snow, feeding A little life with dried tubers."</p> <p>(T.S. Eliot, <i>The Wasteland</i>)</p>	
Epic machinery	<p>The immortal beings who intervene in the lives of mortals to prompt or to further the action in an epic poem</p>	<p>The gods of Olympus in <i>The Iliad</i> and <i>The Odyssey</i>, God and the angels in Milton's <i>Paradise Lost</i>, the "sylphs" in Pope's <i>The Rape of the Lock</i></p>	
Epigram	<p>Short, clever poem with a witty turn of thought</p>	<p>"Sir, I admit your general rule That every poet is a fool, But you yourself may serve to show it That every fool is not a poet."</p> <p>(Samuel Taylor Coleridge)</p>	
Epigraph	<p>Brief quotation found at the beginning of a literary work</p>	<p>Eliot includes two epigraphs at the beginning of "The Hollow Men"</p>	
Epiphany	<p>A sudden flash of insight; a startling discovery and/or appearance; a dramatic realization</p>	<p>Jocasta's sudden realization that her husband is her son is an epiphanous moment in <i>Oedipus the King</i></p>	
Epistolary novel	<p>Novel whose plot is presented entirely through letters written by a character or characters. The novelist can use this technique to present varying first-person points of view</p>	<p>Samuel Richardson's <i>Pamela</i> (considered by many to be the first true novel in English), which consists entirely of letters written back and forth between Pamela and her father</p>	
Epithet	<p>Adjective or phrase used to characterize someone or something</p>	<p><i>Gray-eyed Athena, the wine-dark sea, rosy-fingered dawn</i> (Homer)</p>	
Euphemism	<p>Substitution of an inoffensive word or phrase for another that would be harsh, offensive, or embarrassing</p>	<p>"He passed away" rather than "he died"</p>	
Exemplum	<p>Tale (often incorporated within a sermon) that illustrates a moral principle</p>	<p>"The Pardoner's Tale" by Geoffrey Chaucer</p>	

Fantasy	Narrative involving unusual creatures and improbable or far-fetched events that are explained by way of spells, magic, etc.	<p>Stoker's <i>Dracula</i></p> <p>Rowling's Harry Potter books</p> <p>Tolkien's <i>The Lord of the Rings</i></p>	
Farce	A comedy that depends on exaggerated or improbable situations to amuse the audience	<p><i>The Taming of the Shrew</i> by Shakespeare,</p> <p>Sandler's <i>The Waterboy</i></p>	
Flashback	Interruption of the chronological flow of a narrative by a description of something that happened previously	<i>The Odyssey</i> begins with Odysseus washed up on the shores of Phaeacia. Homer relies on flashback to narrate the hero's adventures over the last ten years	
Flat character	A simple, one-dimensional character with one defining trait about whom little is revealed over the course of the work	<p>Pap in <i>Huck Finn</i></p> <p>Chillingworth in <i>The Scarlet Letter</i></p> <p>Lucy Manette in <i>A Tale of Two Cities</i></p>	
Foil	Character whose personal characteristics contrast with and enhance those of another (a <i>foil</i> was originally a thin sheet of shiny metal placed under a jewel to make it shine more brightly)	Benvolio is a foil for Tybalt in Shakespeare's <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> ; MacDuff is a foil for MacBeth in <i>MacBeth</i>	
Free verse	Poetry that does not have regular rhythm or rhyme	Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself"	
Genre	Category into which a piece of writing can be classified	Poetry, prose, fantasy, tragedy, etc.	
Gothic literature	Literature characterized by mysterious settings and an atmosphere of terror and gloom. The gothic often involves undertones of forbidden sexuality – incest, homosexuality, hints at pedophilia, etc.	Shelley's <i>Frankenstein</i> , Stoker's <i>Dracula</i> , Coleridge's "Christabel," and everything ever written by Edgar Allan Poe	
Grotesque	Describes characters and situations in literature that are distorted and fantastically odd or unnatural	Hulga in O'Connor's "Good Country People."	
Heroic couplet	In poetry, a couplet written in iambic pentameter	<p>"The bookful blockhead, ignorantly read</p> <p>With loads of learned lumber in his head."</p> <p>(Alexander Pope, <i>An Essay on Criticism</i>)</p>	
Hubris	Pride to the point of arrogance or insolence. In Greek myth and tragedy, hubris often leads to one's downfall	Phaëthon, mortal son of Apollo, fell prey to his own hubris when he mistakenly believed he had the strength of a god and could drive the chariot of his father	
Hyperbole	Extreme exaggeration not meant to be taken literally but merely intended for effect	"A greenhouse arrived from Gatsby's." (F. Scott Fitzgerald, <i>The Great Gatsby</i>)	
iambic pentameter	Poetry consisting of five iambs per line (an iamb is a foot (a	<p>~~~~~</p> <p>~~~~~</p> <p>~~~~~</p>	

	group of syllables of set number) of two syllables, with the first syllable unaccented and the second syllable accented)	When I have fears that I may cease to be Before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain (John Keats, "When I Have Fears")	
<i>In medias res</i> (pronounced "in may-dee-us race")	[Latin, literally 'in the midst of things'] Describes the method of beginning a narrative by plunging into the middle of the action without the formality of an introduction, later using flashback to tell what has happened previously. Typical convention of epic poetry.	Homer's <i>The Odyssey</i> , Virgil's <i>The Aeneid</i> , and Milton's <i>Paradise Lost</i> all begin <i>in medias res</i>	
Inversion	Switch in the normal word order, often employed for emphasis or to maintain rhyme scheme or rhythm	"Strong in the force he is" –Yoda	
IRONY	<p>Occurs whenever an author suggests one conclusion while actually intending another, often very different, one.</p> <p>There are three basic types of irony:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal irony – occurs when the intended meaning of the author's words is the opposite of their literal meaning • Irony of situation – occurs when circumstances suggest one conclusion but events actually produce a very different one • Dramatic irony – occurs when we know something a character does not. As a result of his/her ignorance, the character says or does something contrary to what we want or expect him or her to say or do. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saying "That was graceful" when someone slips and falls • When the "diamond" necklace in Guy de Maupassant's story "The Necklace" turns out to be made of paste • In "Little Red Riding Hood" when Little Red keeps stepping closer and closer to "grandma" when <u>we</u> know she should be running the other way. 	
Kenning	Compound word or phrase replacing a common noun, typical of Old English poetry	"Whale-path" for sea, "ring-giver" for king in <i>Beowulf</i>	
Künstlerroman	Novel depicting the growth of an artist from childhood into the beginning stages of fulfilling his/her artistic destiny	James Joyce's <i>A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man</i>	
Litotes (pronounced "lih-toe-lease")	A negative understatement in which some truth is affirmed through the negation of its opposite	"Building the pyramids was no small feat" "Elvis was not unpopular in the South."	
Lyric poem	Fairly short poem that expresses the observations, thoughts,	"She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways" by	

	and feelings of a single speaker; lyric poems are not narrative and therefore lack a plot with a climax	William Wordsworth	
Malapropism	Mistaken use of a word for another word it resembles, often employed by authors for a humorous effect	"Don't draw me no diaphragms!" – Archie Bunker on <i>All in the Family</i> ; "You're like an albacore around my neck!" – Tony Soprano's father in <i>The Sopranos</i>	
Meter	The rhythmical pattern of a poem determined by the number of feet per line (e.g. a line with 5 iambs is written in iambic pentameter)		
Metonymy	Referring to a person or thing in terms of something else closely associated with that person or thing	"The White House" instead of "the president and his advisors," "suits" instead of "company executives," etc.	
Mock heroic	Form of satire that applies the elevated diction, syntax, and format of the classical epic to a trivial subject	"The Nun's Priest's Tale" by Chaucer "The Rape of the Lock" by Pope	
Narrative poem	Poem that tells a story and (unlike lyric poetry) involves all of the elements of plot (exposition, conflict, climax, etc.)	"Paul Revere's Ride" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	
Neoclassicism	Tendency in later art to reflect the principles of reason, clarity, balance, and order embodied in the works of Greece and Rome in antiquity (characteristic of the Augustan movement in English art in the early 1700's)	The spirit of neoclassicism is captured in the poetry of Alexander Pope, the fiction of Henry Fielding, and the satire of Jonathan Swift.	
Octave	An eight-line unit, which may constitute a stanza or a section of a poem (as in a Petrarchan sonnet)	Lines 1-8 of Wyatt's "Whoso List to Hunt"	
Oxymoron	Paradoxical figure of speech created through the juxtaposition of two seemingly contradictory words	Living death, bitter sweet, cruel kindness "Darkness visible" (Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i>)	
Paradox	Statement or situation that on the surface seems impossible but solves itself and conveys meaning	"The Child is the father of the Man" (William Wordsworth)	
Parallelism	The repeated use of the same grammatical structure in a sentence or series of sentences; often used to emphasize what is said and underscore the meaning	"I came, I saw, I conquered" (Plutarch)	
Parody	Comical imitation of a serious piece with the intent of ridiculing the author or his work	Henry Fielding's <i>Shamela</i> , written to ridicule Samuel Richardson's <i>Pamela</i>	
Pastoral	A poem, play, or story that idealizes and celebrates the simple lives of country folk, especially shepherds; very popular until the late 1700's	"The Passionate Shepherd to His Love" by Christopher Marlowe, "Michael" by Wordsworth	
Pathos	The quality of a literary work or passage that evokes pity, compassion, and/or sympathy on the part of the reader. This pity is different from the pity one feels for a tragic hero in that the pathetic figure seems to suffer through no fault of his or her own	Dostoevsky incorporates pathos in his description of Katerina Marmeladov in <i>Crime and Punishment</i>	

Periodic sentence	Sentence that delivers its point at the end with no additional information following the main point	In the spring we go camping. At the piano she practiced scales.	
Pun	Humorous play on words that have several meanings or words that sound the same but have different meanings	"We must hang together or we will hang separately" (Benjamin Franklin)	
Quatrain	Four line stanza	Stanzas in Roetke's "My Papa's Waltz"	
Recognition	The moment at which a character understands his or her situation as it really is; a typical element of tragedy	When Oedipus finally comprehends his identity and history in <i>Oedipus Rex</i>	
Rhyme	<p>The matching of final vowel and consonant sounds in two or more words. There are a few different types of rhyme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End rhyme – describes when rhymes occur at the ends of lines • Internal rhyme – describes when rhymes occur within lines • Feminine rhyme – when the final syllable of a rhyme is unstressed • Masculine rhyme - when the final syllable of a rhymed word is stressed 	<p>"Whose woods these are I think I know. His house is in the village, though" (Frost)</p> <p>"Sam I am, I am Sam" (Seuss)</p> <p>"The whisky on your breath Could make a small boy <i>dizzy</i> But I hung on like death Such waltzing was not <i>easy</i>" (Roetke)</p> <p>"The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the <i>fold</i> And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and <i>gold.</i>" (Byron)</p>	

Romance	Medieval tale dealing with loves and adventures of kings, queens, knights, and ladies; so called because the earliest tales of this type were composed in French, a language derived from that of the Ancient Romans	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> Sir Thomas Mallory's <i>Le Mort d'Arthur</i> Chaucer's <i>The Knight's Tale</i>	
Round character	Well-developed, multi-dimensional character who exhibits a variety of moods, ideas, and facets to his/her personality	Huckleberry Finn	
Satire	<p>Use of humor to expose and ridicule the shortcomings and failings of individuals, institutions, and humanity at large, often in the hope that change and reform are possible. Satire is still categorized according to the</p> <p>styles of its two early masters, Horace and Juvenal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Horatian</i> satire is playfully amusing and seeks to correct vice or foolishness with gentle laughter and sympathetic understanding. • <i>Juvenalian</i> satire is much more scathing and criticizes corruption or incompetence with scorn and outrage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pope's <i>The Rape of the Lock</i> <i>The Simpsons</i> • Swift's "A Modest Proposal" <i>South Park</i> 	
Science fiction	Narrative involving unusual creatures and improbable or far-fetched events that are explained through as-yet unknown scientific technological breakthroughs	Mary Shelley's <i>Frankenstein</i> H.G. Wells's <i>The War of the Worlds</i>	
Segue (pronounced "seg-way")	Means to get from one portion of a poem or story to another; a way of smoothly connecting different parts of a work, often involving transitional words or phrases	The gravedigging scene in Hamlet provides a segue into Hamlet's return to the castle	
SESTET	An six-line unit, which may constitute a stanza or a section of a poem (as in a Petrarchan sonnet)	The concluding six lines of Wyatt's "Whoso List to Hunt"	
Soliloquy	In drama, speech in which a character presents inner thoughts as if alone	Hamlet's "to be or not to be" speech	
Sonnet	<p>[Italian, literally 'little song'] Fourteen line poem in iambic pentameter. The two common types in English poetry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petrarchan - octave (<i>abbaabba</i>) and sestet (<i>cdcdcd</i>) 	Many poems of the Renaissance and the Romantic era are sonnets. The form fell out of favor and is almost completely absent from eighteenth-century poetry, though it became popular again in the Romantic era.	

	• Shakespearean – 3 quatrains (<i>abab, cdcd, efef</i>) followed by a couplet (<i>gg</i>)		
Stanza	Deliberate grouping of lines of poetry		
Static character	Character who remains consistent throughout the book, undergoing no significant change	Atticus Finch and Bob Ewell are both static characters in <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>	
Stream of consciousness	A style of writing which attempts to replicate the way the human mind works. Ideas are presented in random order; thoughts are often interrupted and unfinished	Toni Morrison's <i>Beloved</i> Faulkner's <i>The Sound and the Fury</i> James Joyce's <i>Ulysses</i>	
Style	Way a writer uses language; takes into account diction, syntax, figures of speech, etc. The writer's characteristic "voice"	Hemingway's style is simple and straightforward; Fitzgerald's style is poetic and filled with imagery.	
Synecdoche	Figure of speech in which one part stands for the whole	"All <i>hands</i> on deck!" "That's a nice set of <i>wheels</i> ." "We need a few strong <i>backs</i> ."	
Synesthesia	The description of one kind of sense impression by using words that normally describe another	"Delicious-sounding music," the "blue-black cold" in Hayden's "Winter Sundays"	
Syntax	The way in which words, phrases, and sentences are ordered and connected	Twain often uses ungrammatical syntax to imitate the dialects of his subjects	
Tale	A story that narrates strange happenings in a direct manner, without detailed descriptions of character (in fact, characters are often not named)	Chaucer's "The Pardoner's Tale," which tells the story of three unnamed rioters.	
Theme	A general idea about life that a work of literature challenges the reader to think about	Love, family, civic responsibility, revenge, forgiveness, morality, mortality – these are all common themes in literature	
Tone	Describes the way an author manipulates language to reveal his or her attitude about a subject and thereby create the mood of a work	The wry, witty tone of the narrator of Mark Twain's <i>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</i> helps established the light-hearted mood of the piece overall	
Tragedy	A type of drama in which a hero falls from glory into suffering as a result of a tragic flaw. Tragedy typically involves a moment of <i>recognition</i> in which the hero realizes that he is largely to blame for his own fate.	<i>Oedipus Rex, MacBeth, Hamlet</i>	
Tragic flaw	Some defect or weakness (but <u>not</u> <i>wickedness</i>) in a hero or heroine that leads to his or her own downfall	Oedipus's pride, Macbeth's ambition, Hamlet's indecisiveness	
Tragic hero	A privileged character held in great esteem who, by virtue of a tragic flaw, experiences a reversal of fortune from good to bad and experiences more suffering than is fair or deserved	Oedipus, MacBeth, Hamlet	
Verisimilitude	A work of fiction's quality of appearing to be true to life, to	Daniel Defoe includes a number of minute	

	have actually occurred	details (ship's inventory, tide times, sail times, latitudes and longitudes, etc.) to lend <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> a semblance of reality and to achieve verisimilitude	
Verse Essay	An essay written in the form of a poem, restricted almost exclusively to the Eighteenth Century	Pope's "An Essay on Man" and "An Essay on Criticism," both consisting entirely of heroic couplets.	
Volta	A marked shift in focus or tone between the octave and sestet of a Petrarchan sonnet	Go read a Petrarchan sonnet and find it!	